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ABSTRACT

A counseling program for delinquent teenagers was developed in 1969-70 to serve four public high schools in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project was designed to provide continuous support to delinquent juveniles after their release from state institutions. Former teachers from the institutions and special counselors in the Milwaukee public schools helped to bridge the teenagers readjustment to the regular school system. The three main components of the project included prerelease activities, programming and orientation after release, and continued supportive counseling. In 1970-71, the project was expanded to include a summer program. Chapters of this case study concern general information, program planning, program management, implementation of the program, budget, and program evaluation. Results of the program indicated the recidivism rate for returnees in the project decreased each year, the number of days survived at school increased, and attendance improved. A subjective evaluation is included. (MJM)

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A Title I ESEA Case Study:

The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

SP 005 845

1972

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PREFACE

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides funds to more than three-fourths of the Nation's school districts to improve opportunities for educationally deprived children in low-income areas.

But what constitutes a good title I project? What are the common denominators of success?

To answer these questions, the Division of Compensatory Education, which administers title I in the U.S. Office of Education, has examined a number of successful projects. As might be expected, different assets were found in different projects; each project represented a local school district's response to local problems. Nonetheless, many elements of such projects can be used as examples for other school districts implementing similar programs.

Each case study included in this series can, either as a whole or in part, be replicated. The reports concentrate on educational services and administrative design but also include illustrations of good practices in providing supportive services and involving parents and other community members.

In brief, the case studies in this series describe what is being done in specific locales and where and in what ways the title I mission is being accomplished.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Identification Data

- State and district – Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- Type of program – Counseling services for delinquent teenagers
- Grade level – High school
- Number of correctional institutions served – Three: two boys' and one girls' schools
- Number of public high schools served – Four
- Cost per pupil – $659 in title I ESEA funds plus $20 in regular counseling costs
- Date when program began – 1969-70

Description of School District

Milwaukee, located on the shores of Lake Michigan in southeastern Wisconsin, is the largest city in the State. With a population of 717,372, it is the 12th largest city in the United States, according to 1970 Census figures. Dr. Richard P. Gousha is the superintendent of schools.

In 1971-72 there were 34 public schools, 16 nonpublic schools, and 8 homes for neglected or delinquent children participating in Milwaukee's title I program. Sixteen other public schools were eligible to receive funds according to Federal criteria but were not participating in the program. Of the 34 public schools receiving title I services, 26 were elementary schools, 4 junior high schools, and 4 senior high schools.

The four high schools – West Division, South Division, North Division, and Lincoln – participating in the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project are the only high schools in Milwaukee receiving title I services. In addition, they and three other high schools eligible for but not participating in the title I program enroll approximately 80 percent of the city's juvenile parolees.

Description of Correctional Institutions

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services administers three correctional institutions for juveniles aged 12 to 18. The two boys' schools, located at Plymouth and Wales, have an average daily attendance of about 250. The girls' school at Oregon has a daily attendance of about 200 students. The average stay at the two boys' homes is 3½ months, at Oregon 4 months..

Each institution has a comprehensive educational program staffed by accredited teachers. The pupil/teacher ratio is less than 15 to 1. In addition to the regular academic curriculum, a large variety of vocational courses are offered.

All three institutions receive title I ESEA funds to provide supplementary services, including those available through the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project. Many of the extra services aim at behavioral modification.

Capsule Description of the Program

The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project is actually two separate title I ESEA proposals, one written by the State department which administers the correctional institutions, the other by the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Designed to provide continuous support to delinquent juveniles after their release from State institutions, the project uses former teachers from the institutions and special counselors in the Milwaukee Public Schools to bridge the teenagers' readjustment to the regular school system.

As the students make the transition from the institutions to the public schools, there are three main components of the project:

1. Prerelease activities

2. Programing and orientation after release

3. Continued supportive counseling.

Four liaison teachers, two at Wales and one each at Plymouth and Oregon, provide the link between the institutions and the Milwaukee Public Schools. Students due for release and assigned to one of the four participating Milwaukee high schools are informed about the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project, what help they can expect to receive, who their counselor will be, and what their school program will be like. The liaison teachers also work out a preliminary program for each student with the returnee counselor.

The returnee counselors are responsible for fitting the returnee into the school curriculum, often in the middle of a semester. The liaison teachers provide personal observations that can be useful in scheduling. The counselors treat each case individually, assigning one student to the work-release program while giving another a full schedule of academic classes.

Both the returnee counselors and the liaison teachers are involved in the continuing supportive help the students receive. They make daily attendance checks and periodic reports of academic progress. They are available for individual conferences or group discussions, and one member of the team is always consulted if a returnee gets in trouble with the school administration. Close ties are also maintained with parole officers assigned to participating students.

The project was expanded in 1970-71 to include a summer program. Team members enrolled 82 percent of the participants interested in summer school or found jobs for them. Only 19 students did not request such help, were not referred to the project staff, or could not be placed. In addition, the liaison teachers and returnee counselors made

periodic checks on the participants, providing support and helping to solve problems that arose.

In the 1st year of the project three liaison teachers and two returnee counselors served about 100 teenagers at West Division and South Division High Schools. By 1971 there were four liaison teachers, two paraprofessionals, and four returnee counselors working with more than 200 students at four high schools.

PLANNING THE PROGRAM

The idea for the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project was born early in the 1968-69 school year, but the details took more than 6 months to work out. The planning team included administrators from the Milwaukee Public Schools and the Division of Corrections in the State Department of Health and Social Services, representatives from the State Department of Public Instruction and Milwaukee's Department of Guidance Services, and the principals of South Division and West Division High Schools.

Determining Pupil Needs

In February 1968 Milwaukee's Department of Educational Research and Program Assessment did a large-scale, cross-sectional study of the personal needs of a sampling of students in the city's title I attendance area. The study was designed to aid in the planning of future title I projects. A sample of the student needs card used in the survey is shown as figure 1.

The survey indicated that teachers saw reading, oral expression, and work-study habits as the greatest needs at the primary level. Reading, motivation, and self-concept were considered the biggest needs for junior high school students. At the senior high level, work-study habits, attendance, and reading were the three problem areas.

Milwaukee's title I program includes Elementary Reading Centers and a Speech and Language Development Program to satisfy the critical needs cited by elementary school teachers. Many of the other problem areas are taken care of in widespread counseling programs. The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project is particularly directed toward the attendance problem at the senior high level.

The planners agreed that delinquent teenagers were not prepared to cope with the demands of the formal school structure. They had problems adjusting to classrooms which are historically centered around a model of verbal facility, delayed gratification, impulse control, and reduced motor functioning.

The traditional curriculum was not suited to the social, psychological, or educational needs of delinquent adolescents. They needed more personal attention and a greater exposure to job planning and work experience since many considered their high school education as the end of their formal training.

Three groups of teenagers, listed in order of priority, were considered in need of the extra help the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project offered:

1. Returnees from correctional institutions who had returned since the start of the fall semester

2. Past returnees who were still on parole

3. Those adolescents who had had dealings with the law but had not been committed to a correctional institution.

Figure 1. Sample of Student Needs Survey card

24 Sample Joe

M 10B 321 14

DIRECTIONS: PLEASE PLACE IN RANK ORDER AT THE RIGHT THE NUMBERS OF THE THREE MOST PRESSING NEEDS FOR THIS CHILD.

GREATEST NEED _____

2ND GREATEST NEED _____

3RD GREATEST NEED _____

1. READING
2. ORAL EXPRESSION
3. ARITHMETIC
4. IMPROVING SELF-CONCEPT
5. PHYSICAL HEALTH
6. ATTENDANCE
7. DISCIPLINE
8. WORK AND STUDY HABITS
9. SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT
10. SOCIAL STUDIES
11. TARDINESS
12. MOTIVATION TO ACHIEVE
13. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
14. EMOTIONAL STABILITY
15. RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY
16. VOCATIONAL AWARENESS AND EXPECTATIONS
17. ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCHOOL
18. WRITTEN LANGUAGE
19. OUT OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL STIMULATION
20. RESPONSIBILITY
21. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT
22. SOCIAL SKILLS
23. IF NEEDED, RECORD YOUR
24. DESCRIPTION OF UNLISTED
25. NEEDS ON REVERSE SIDE OF CARD.

Source: Milwaukee Public Schools

The liaison teachers and returnee counselors spend most of their time with the 207 parolees in the four participating high schools. A limited number of the 318 probationers in these schools are served if they are involved with one of the parolees as friends, if they are a relative of a parolee, or if they are getting into excessive trouble and indications are that they may end up in an institution if they do not receive supportive counseling.

Involving Parents and Community

Parents were integrally involved in the planning of Milwaukee's title I projects through a student needs survey in March 1969. Of the 1,750 parents in the title I target area who received questionnaires, more than 61 percent returned them. They checked the three greatest needs of a child from a list of 19 educational, social, psychological, and emotional needs.

However, because institutionalized children are separated from their families, the involvement of parents in the actual planning of the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project was minimal. In some cases, students were not even allowed to return home after

their release, but instead were placed in a foster home. Both the returnee counselors and liaison teachers made home visits to inform parents or foster parents about the project and find out more about the adolescents.

Community involvement was more extensive. The original planning group involved a large number of community action organizations in the project as a means of providing supportive services. Some groups funded jobs for the students, particularly in summer. Others raised funds to implement work-study programs. A few provided tutoring and counseling services.

Establishing Specific Objectives

Delinquent teenagers have generally poor attendance, academic, and behavioral records which deter their readjustment in school by making them apprehensive about reentry. Their previous school experience has been marked by frustration, failure, and a sense of futility. Thus, they tend to avoid the situation by skipping school, often the first step toward returning to the institution.

The objectives for the project were directed toward this attendance problem. Specifically, they were to:

1. Maintain or increase the percentage of reduction in recidivism based on the citywide average through intensive group and individual counseling.

2. Maintain or increase improvement in school attendance among this population as it relates to the average attendance of the four title I high schools.

3. Increase the average number of days survived in the school setting for those students who have been returned to the same school.

Identifying and Using Resources

Students involved in the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project have access to all services of the Milwaukee Public Schools. Since all returnees are eligible for title I services, they are often placed in special title I classes where remedial assistance is available and receive help from such personnel as the school psychologist and social worker. In addition, a large portion of the positions available in Milwaukee's Work Experience Program, which allows students to attend school for half a day and then receive one credit for working the other half-day, have been allotted to former delinquents.

Liaison teachers and returnee counselors have also solicited help from a number of community organizations, among them:

- YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association)
- YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association)
- District Office of Probation and Parole
- United Fund agencies

- Jewish Vocational Service—a service which provides half- or full-day work experience and intensive counseling for rehabilitation purposes
- University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee—Computer Counseling Program and Gaming and Simulation Groups
- Project Phoenix—a project funded under the Safe Streets Act, directed by the Milwaukee Indian Action Group, working in the schools and at their center with Indian children.
- Commando I Project—a group of black ex-convicts who act as resource persons at the group meetings in the school and fund summer employment positions
- Felons and Community Together—a project sponsored by the State under the Wisconsin Correctional Service, working in the schools and at their center
- Spanish Action Group—a group working with the counselors to help rehabilitate Spanish-speaking youngsters
- Milwaukee Area Technical College—a facility providing vocational training on part- or full-time basis, leading to graduation from the public schools
- Junior Achievement—which provides a summer work project in which the returnees are included
- Milwaukee Enforcers—a group which is working toward the rehabilitation of troubled youth.

MANAGING THE PROGRAM

The responsibility of managing the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project fell to two key men—Allen E. Harbort, Superintendent of Correctional Education in the State's Division of Corrections, and Terry Mehail, Supervisor for Milwaukee's Department of Guidance Services. In 1970, as the program expanded and more personnel were added, Milton W. Hintze, the liaison teacher from the Kettle Moraine School for Boys at Plymouth, was appointed supervisor for the program.

Selecting Staff

The primary requisite for both the counselors and the liaison teachers was experience in working with institutionalized and delinquent students.

Originally there were three liaison teachers in the program—Ray Malec from Wales, Milton Hintze from Kettle Moraine, and Mrs. Kathy Stamen from the girls' school at Oregon. All were teachers at the correctional institutions and, as such, certified by the State of Wisconsin. As members of the institutional staff, the liaison teachers had every third summer off to attend school; their graduate studies were to be in the behavioral sciences. During the 1970-71 school year, Michael St. John, a former parole officer in Milwaukee with training in exceptional education, was hired by the Wisconsin School for Boys at Wales as an additional liaison teacher.

The returnee counselors were all certified guidance counselors in the Milwaukee Public Schools who volunteered for the project. They were selected on the basis of their involvement with and knowledge of the community in which the target schools were located. The original counselors were Charles Reichert, whose athletic prowess and position as track coach at West Division High School was particularly helpful in reaching students, and Emmanuel Tomasello, a Latin American of Italian ancestry who was fluent in four languages, including Spanish. He worked at South Division High School, where a large portion of the students had Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Mexican backgrounds. Mr. Reichert was promoted early in 1971 and replaced by Herman Orr, an original applicant for the project. Two more high schools were added to the program in 1970-71, and Earl Suttle became the returnee counselor at North Division High School with Richard Tollefsen accepting the same position at Lincoln High School.

Specific employment requirements for the returnee counselors were:

1. A master's degree or its equivalent in the area of guidance and counseling
2. At least 2 years of teaching experience
3. Two or more years of counseling experience
4. Familiarity with the neighborhood in which the school is located regarding neighborhood organizations, facilities available, churches, etc.
5. Ability to "speak the language" of this population

6. Ability to communicate with teachers, administrators, parole officers, and parents diplomatically

7. Flexibility required to adjust to rapidly changing demands of the student population as well as the school

8. Thorough knowledge of the variety of curriculum offerings available in the school in order to provide an individualized program to the student.

All applicants for this position were interviewed by the Department of Guidance Services of the Milwaukee Public Schools.

Miss Eileen Ciezki, a former teacher at the Kettle Moraine School for Boys, and Miss Hattie Reed were hired as paraprofessionals in the 1970-71 school year to work with the female returnees. Both worked part time.

Selecting and Preparing Facilities

Program planners agreed that each school should provide pleasant and attractive facilities that would allow the counselor and liaison teacher to work in unison. Ideally, the office for the team would be close to those of other guidance counselors, to facilitate communication. Space should also be made available for student group meetings and activities.

In actuality, the counselors and liaison teachers made do with whatever facilities were available to them in the already crowded school buildings. While Mr. Reichert had an office near those of other guidance counselors at West Division, Mr. Tomasello worked out of an old dressing room at South Division. The importance of the facilities was not the physical makeup but the fact that it offered returnees a place to go and let off steam, to discuss their problems, and to get help.

Organizing and Scheduling Participants

Once a representative of Milwaukee's Pupil Personnel Department assigned a student from one of the institutions to Lincoln, North Division, South Division, or West Division High Schools, the liaison teacher got in touch with the student and explained the program. Then the returnee counselor visited the institution, talked to the student, examined his records, and programed him.

The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project introduced a great deal of flexibility into the traditional programing of the returnees. While they sometimes scheduled students for only academic courses or substituted a vocational education class, the returnee counselors found a number of other alternatives providing varying degrees of learning and work experience. Among the alternatives most often used were:

1. Milwaukee Area Technical College's Continuation School.—The more vocationally oriented program of the Continuation School made it more suitable for some returnees who, because of age or discord, found the public schools stifling. North

Division and West Division used the MATC program more frequently than Lincoln and South Division.

2. Work Experience Program.—The program gave students academic credit for working during the school day. They also attended regular classes part of each day. In 1969-70, the project placed 23 returnees in the Work Experience Program; in 1970-71, 35.

3. Work Release.—Students were released from school to accept full-time jobs. Students participating in the program fell from 13 in 1969-70 to 11 in 1970-71, reflecting the tighter job market and the wider use of the Work Experience Program.

4. Northcott Neighborhood House.—The foundation ran a Graduate Equivalency Diploma program in which a number of returnees approaching 18 years of age were enrolled. It is privately funded.

Liaison teachers and returnee counselors checked the attendance of the students, either in school or at work, daily and sometimes several times a day. Participants were expected to be on the job or in class at all times, although they were allowed to leave classes for visits with one of the team members.

Scheduling Staff Time

The liaison teachers and returnee counselors maintained no strict schedule, although they tried to be easily accessible to students at least part of every day. The liaison teachers divided their time between the institutions and the high schools, spending at least 2 days a week at the institution. They also provided liaison with the parole officers in charge of participating returnees. The returnee counselors spent most of the school day within one of the four high schools, although they occasionally left to make home visits or arrange for jobs.

A typical morning for a team member might run like this:

7:30 — Stop at home of a returnee who has been out of school for a week and find out the cause of absenteeism. Arrange for money to buy needed books.

8:00 — Meet with team members.

8:30 — Talk to five returnees waiting in office. Four just want to talk. The fifth says he is sick and is given a pass to return home.

9:03 — A new student drops in to talk about his schedule.

9:15 — An employer calls to say he is pleased with a returnee's work. He would like him to work more hours. The counselor promises to check on whether this is possible.

9:20 — Go over the day's attendance chart. Call two students who are absent and get them out of bed. They promise to be at school in half an hour.

9:30 — Try to stop disruption in a second-floor classroom involving a returnee. The offender has disappeared and can't be found.

9:40 — Complete programing of new student.

9:50 – Interview four students for possible jobs with the Neighborhood Youth Corps. Send them on to talk to corps representative.

10:05 – Receive a call from representative of the Commando Project who has found three jobs for returnees. Promise to set up appointments and drive students to interviews the next afternoon.

10:10 – Talk to Neighborhood Youth Corps representative about the outcome of the interviews.

10:12 – Another student comes in to be programed.

10:30 – A student says his teacher won't allow him in class because he walked out the day before. Call the teacher and have the student readmitted.

10:50 – Three students drop in between classes.

11:00 – A girl whom team members have been unable to contact calls. She thinks she may have a job and promises to stop at school the next day.

11:05 – Leave for visit to foster home of four students. Discuss the boys' school and extracurricular problems with the mother.

11:45 – Several students stop in on their way to lunch.

Developing Curriculum

The curriculum for each student in the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project was dependent on individual needs and aptitudes. Basically, participants functioned within the traditional curriculum of the four title I high schools. However, they received extra help from other title I programs, had a better chance of participating in work experience programs, and had more supportive assistance than most students.

Each high school in the project established a Meaningful Learning Center, an unstructured learning area with materials and techniques similar to those in the institutions to give the returnees some sense of continuity. The returnees liked the centers and wanted to spend more time there than was allotted in their schedules.

Many of the important changes in the traditional school atmosphere were concerned with school regulations. The liaison teachers and returnee counselors persuaded administrators at the four high schools to limit the number of suspensions for truancy, often a key factor in the return of a student to an institution. Office workers kept separate attendance records for students in the projects and gave the returnee counselors daily reports. The counselors or the liaison teachers followed up on each absentee. If truancy continued, the parole officer was contacted.

Individual conferences were held with students to discuss personal problems and to provide support on a one-to-one basis. Group "rap sessions" were used to talk over mutual problems, gain insight into others' problems, and give support to fellow returnees. Outside resource persons often attended the group counseling sessions.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

Training the Staff

When the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project became a fact in the summer of 1969, the original team members designed their own training program in cooperation with the State Department of Health and Social Services and the Milwaukee Public Schools. They visited each of three institutions — the Milwaukee County Children's Court Center, the Juvenile Detention Home in Milwaukee, and the Mental Health Center. They discussed the project with officials of the Milwaukee District Office of Probation and Parole and attended the inservice training sessions for parole agents. They met with representatives of Wisconsin's Department of Vocational Rehabilitation to find out what services were available to juveniles and discussed employment possibilities with officials of the Youth Opportunity Center, the Youth Development Program, and other community groups.

As the project staff grew, original team members trained the new personnel. More formal types of training were also available. The liaison teachers attended the district meetings of the American Correctional Association. Charles Reichert (the original returnee counselor at West Division High School), under the direction of Terry Mehail, taught an inservice training course for credit to Milwaukee teachers and administrators. The original liaison teachers served as resource personnel for many of the class discussions.

Staff Duties

The duties of the liaison teacher-returnee counselor team fell into three categories: (1) Duties assigned to the liaison teacher; (2) duties assigned to the returnee counselors; and (3) duties in which all team members were involved.

The liaison teachers were responsible for the prerelease counseling of project participants. They obtained background information from the institution and from personal observations on the needs, service, credits, and attitudes of the returnees. They also funneled information back to the institution about the progress and needs of the returnees. The liaison teachers were the go-betweens for the public schools and the District Office of Probation and Parole.

The returnee counselors' duties were concentrated within the school. They communicated with teachers, administrators, and supportive personnel to provide a flexible program for each returnee and checked with these persons regarding his progress. They developed a personal relationship with the returnee through counseling and helped him develop the potential he possessed.

Both the returnee counselors and the liaison teachers performed the following functions:

1. Checked on returnees' attendance records.

2. Provided personal counseling and helped encourage group support.

3. Visited the homes of students.

4. Cooperated with and sought the involvement of community agencies in the project.

5. Held joint meetings with the parole office to discuss returnees' progress.

6. Assisted in developing alternative schedules for the returnees.

7. Coordinated the various stages of the work-study program.

Conducting Instruction

Although actual instruction was not the responsibility of the liaison teachers or returnee counselors, they did design specific activities aimed at achieving project objectives. These activities are outlined in table 1.

Table 1. Objectives and activities of Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project, Milwaukee, 1969-71

Project objectives	Major activities
1. Maintain or increase percentage of reduction in recidivism based on the citywide average through intensive group and individual counseling.	Provide as much flexibility in the students' school program as possible.
	Provide intensive counseling help to both individuals and small groups.
	Work closely with classroom teachers to provide more information regarding the special needs of individual students.
	Help provide students with materials necessary for instructional purposes and tutorial help when needed.
	Involve students in work experience programs when necessary and provide occupational information.
	Keep in close contact with the home to insure followthrough on school-initiated remedial measures.
	Work closely with parole officers regarding adjustment of students to school.
2. Maintain or increase improvement in school attendance among this population as it relates to the average attendance of the four title I high schools.	Make individual check on attendance patterns of returnees.
	Contact the home when absence occurs.
	Help in adjusting school problems if these are contributing to the attendance problem.

Table 1. Objectives and activities of Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project, Milwaukee, 1969-71—Continued

Project objectives	Major activities
	Work with administrators to provide a wider tolerance in the attendance area when standards of the school are not met.
	Provide for immediate return of students if they are suspended.
	Counsel students who show erratic attendance.
	Work closely with the school social worker.
3. Increase the average number of days survived in the school setting for those students who have been returned to the same school.	Intervene immediately and resolve any pupil-teacher conflict that arises through the use of discussions, plans, changes of program, or individual tutoring.
	Counsel clients in their attempt to develop ego and to establish individual identity.
	Identify aids that might keep students on a positive school and life course.
	Attempt, through personal contact, to influence adults to adopt a more realistic outlook toward the returnee population.

Involving Parents and Community

Contact with parents or foster parents of participating students came in the form of home visits or conferences at the school. The returnee counselor visited the home of each new returnee, explaining the project and soliciting the parents' cooperation. Repeat visits were made when a problem arose or when parents asked for a meeting. The parents visited the schools during daytime open houses and at special conferences after each grading period.

In the summer of 1971 parents were asked to assess the impact of the project on the students. Figure 2 is a copy of the survey form. More than 75 percent of the parents answering the survey indicated that they felt the schools were trying to help their children. Seventy percent said the returnee counselor had specifically helped their son or daughter "very much." Fifty percent felt their child's performance had improved as a result of this contact. A large number of parents requested more joint conferences with the counselor and parole officers.

Project evaluators recognized the weakness of parental involvement in the project and planned increased family therapy.

Community involvement was generally very positive and resulted in the finding of many jobs for returnees, particularly in the 1971 summer program.

Figure 2. Form for parent survey of the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project

---

1. Do you believe the school in general is making an effort to help your son or daughter?

   _____ very much _____ very little

   _____ some _____ none at all (explain why)

2. Do you believe that the returnee counselor has helped your son or daughter?

   _____ very much _____ very little

   _____ some _____ not at all (explain why)

3. Do you believe your son or daughter has improved since working with the counselor?

   _____ very much _____ about the same

   _____ somewhat _____ less positive

4. How many times have you talked with the counselor? _____

5. How many times have you talked with the parole officer? _____

6. Has the counselor been as helpful as the parole officer? _____

   _____ more helpful _____ less helpful

   _____ as helpful _____ I'm not sure

7. There should be more conferences between: (please check)

   _____ parent and parole officer

   _____ parent and counselor

   _____ parent and counselor and parole officer

   _____ no conferences are needed

8. What has the counselor done for your son or daughter that you have liked?

9. What has the counselor done for your son or daughter that you don't like?

10. What do you wish the counselor would do for your son or daughter?

Disseminating Information

The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project has been publicized on television, in newspapers, and in magazines and newsletters. In September 1970 the NBC affiliate in Milwaukee presented three 3-minute segments describing the scope, personnel, and physical locations of the project and coverage of a computer program used with the returnees. The next month the city's ABC affiliate presented a 30-minute documentary of the project, including many of the supportive activities. It was shown twice. The local CBS affiliate also ran a 5-minute broadcast about the project.

Descriptions of the project appeared in *American Education*, a U.S. Office of Education magazine with national circulation; the *Superintendent's Bulletin*, a newsletter for all Milwaukee Public Schools employees; and the *Division of Corrections Bulletin* from the State Department of Health and Social Services. The *Milwaukee Journal*, the largest daily newspaper in Wisconsin, ran a feature article highlighting the girls in the project.

In addition, project staff members gave presentations at a number of parent-teacher conferences, at a nationwide principals' conference held in Milwaukee, at the Association of Correctional Psychologists' 1971 convention, and at various community and interschool meetings.

The amount of publicity generated many questions about the program which were answered individually by team members.

BUDGET

The Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project, although entirely funded under title I, actually had two separate budgets. The State Department of Health and Social Services, which administers title I activities in State operated institutions for neglected and delinquent children with funds allocated by the State education agency, budgeted $70,315.25 for the project in 1971-72. The Milwaukee Public Schools, using a portion of their title I allocation, committed $65,915 to the project.

The breakdown for the State grant was:

Salaries (4 liaison teachers and two part-time staff members, including fringe benefits)		$58,000.25
Travel expenses		11,270.00
Phone, office rental, and equipment		1,045.00
	Total	$70,315.25

The breakdown under Milwaukee's title I funds was:

Salaries (4 counselors)		$45,402
Salaries (4 part-time clerical aides)		9,500
Fringe benefits		6,725
Overtime expenses (72 hours for each counselor)		1,668
Travel expenses		1,510
Textbooks for students		500
Bus tickets for students		120
Postage		40
Instructional materials		400
Office supplies		50
	Total	$65,915

Thus, with 207 students participating in the project, the average per pupil expenditure was $659.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project was in line with its predetermined objectives—reduction in the number of recidivists, an increase in the number of days survived at school, and improvement in school attendance. Milwaukee's Division of Planning and Long Range Assessment in the Department of Educational Research and Program Assessment was responsible for gathering most of the evaluative data.

Objective Evaluation

The recidivism rate for returnees in the project decreased each year, based on monthly statistics compiled for the first 4 months of the school year. The September recidivism rate fell from 7.4 percent in 1969, with 94 students at two high schools, to 4.8 percent with only 10 of 207 participating students returned to institutions in 1970, to 2.8 percent in 1971. The October rates were 17.0 percent in 1969, 12.4 percent the following year, and 8.8 percent in 1971. In November 1969, 30 of the 103 students in the project returned to the institutions, a rate of 29.1 percent. The rate dropped to 18.4 percent in November 1970 and to 12.8 percent, with 31 of 241 students returned, the next year. The December recidivism rates were 34.9 percent in 1969, 23.6 percent the next year, and 15.8 percent in 1971.

Comparative year-long recidivism rates have been computed only for South Division and West Division High Schools, which have been involved in the project 2 full years. The rate at South Division fell from 37.2 percent the first year of the project to 30.5 percent in 1970-71, an improvement of 6.7 percent. At West Division the rate fell from 44.1 percent to 40.7 percent, an improvement of 3.4 percent.

While the comparative survival rates of students returned to the institutions will not be available for North Division and Lincoln High Schools until the end of the 1971-72 school year, the rates for the two other high schools improved in the first 2 years of the project. In 1969-70 the 29 recidivists at South Division High School survived an average of 91.5 days before being returned to the institutions. The next year the average recidivist survived 92.6 days. The improvement in survival rate was more dramatic at West Division where 41 students returned to the institutions in 1969-70 survived an average of 81.8 days in school. The following year the average rose to 92.8 days.

The third project objective, improvement in attendance among the project group above the school average, was not met because of variables planners had not foreseen in the first 2 years of the project. The variables were:

1. Runaways.—These were students whose whereabouts were not known and who might be absent for long periods of time, decreasing the attendance average of the project group.

2. Students near 18 years of age.—Parole agents often let such students stay away from school, knowing they would drop out at age 18.

3. Students enrolled in the program a month or less before the end of the school year.—Many simply never showed up at school until the following year.

Although the attendance of returnees actively participating in the program improved, the improvement was offset by students in the three variable groups. Therefore, the evaluation was refined to break the attendance data into three components: (1) Data for the entire returnee population; (2) data for those attending school; and (3) data for the variable group not attending school.

Subjective Evaluation

In addition to the parent survey form discussed earlier, a survey form was also sent to parole agents asking them to assess the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project. This form is shown as figure 3. Ninety-three percent of the parole agents answering the questionnaire agreed that the returnee counselors were effectively assisting the returnee. The agents felt the project positively affected the returnee by:

1. Giving the returnees someone to relate to in school—73 percent.

2. Making the returnee feel his educational needs will be considered—33 percent.

3. Improving the school attendance of the returnee—27 percent.

4. Maintaining closer supervision of the returnee—20 percent.

Nearly 90 percent of the parole agents did not feel the liaison teachers or returnee counselors duplicated their work. In fact, they felt team members complemented the work of agents by keeping them informed about the returnee and his activities, saving agents' time by being the contact with the school, and coordinating goals with parole agents. Forty percent of the parole agents wanted the project expanded to other schools.

Other indications of the project's success are:

1. Many high school principals and administrators throughout the State are interested in implementing the project. In Milwaukee, two non-title I high schools have already instituted a similar program. Other high schools plan to include the project in future budget requests.

2. Members of Milwaukee's Pupil Personnel Department are pleased when they can assign more students to high schools offering the project because they recognize the importance of the supportive help the liaison teachers and returnee counselors offer.

3. The Children's Court, both the judges and the probation department attached to the court, has utilized project personnel to give delinquent teenagers "one more chance" under the closely supervised setup of the project.

Figure 3. Parole agent survey of the Liaison Teacher-Returnee Counselor Project

1. The returnee counselors are effectively assisting the returnee.

   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. It is important for the returnee to have a counselor to be accountable to.

   Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. In what ways has the returnee counselor program influenced the returnees?

4. How does the returnee program complement your work?

5. Does the returnee program duplicate your work? (If yes, please explain.)

6. What suggestions do you have regarding the returnee program?

GPO 932-034

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